

Higher Level Teaching Assistant Status and the HLTA Standards:

What schools need to know

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What is the historical perspective of HLTA?

HLTA status and the standards

HLTA status was introduced in 2003 to support school workforce reform. An important part of the reform process was the introduction of a set of professional standards to recognise higher level classroom support for teaching and learning and that teaching assistants working at the higher level provide valuable support for teaching and learning. People with HLTA status undertake a wide variety of roles - some work across the curriculum, some act as specialists for a specific subject and many contribute to lesson planning and develop learning resources. The HLTA professional standards provide assurance to teachers, employers and parents of the quality of the contribution to pupils' learning that teaching assistants with HLTA status can be expected to make. The standards identify what candidates need to demonstrate in order to be awarded HLTA status.

Management of the HLTA programme

Until September 2012, overall responsibility for the HLTA programme in England was through the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), latterly the Teaching Agency. The programme was managed on a regional basis with one organisation in each of the nine government office regions with responsibility for the assessment of candidates for HLTA status. These organisations were known, and continue to be known, as Regional Providers of Assessment (RPAs). From September 2012, the RPAs have collaborated to become the HLTA National Assessment Partnership (HNAP) to maintain a quality assured continuation of the HLTA programme in each region (visit www.hlta.org.uk for more information on HNAP).

What are the statutory requirements?

The Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012 are statutory and define 'Specified work' within schools as follows:


Specified work

5. (1) Each of the following activities is specified work for the purposes of these Regulations:
 - (a) planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
 - (b) delivering lessons to pupils;
 - (c) assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
 - (d) reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.
- (2) In paragraph (1)(b) "delivering" includes delivery via distance learning or computer aided techniques.

Furthermore it states:

Persons who may carry out specified work under supervision

6. (1) This paragraph applies to a person who carries out specified work in a school where:
 - (a) the person carries out such work in order to assist or support the work of a qualified teacher or a nominated teacher in the school;
 - (b) the person is subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or nominated teacher in accordance with arrangements made by the head teacher of the school; and
 - (c) the head teacher is satisfied that the person has the skills, expertise and experience required to carry out specified work.
- (2) In this paragraph a “nominated teacher” means a person who is mentioned in paragraphs 2, 3 or 4 of this Schedule and who is nominated by the head teacher where the head teacher considers that appropriate in the circumstances.
- (3) In determining whether the person mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) has the skills, expertise and experience required to carry out specified work in a school, **the head teacher may have regard to:**
 - (a) **such standards for higher-level teaching assistants**, or guidance concerning school support staff as may be published from time to time by the Secretary of State; and
 - (b) such guidance as to contractual matters relating to school support staff as may be published from time to time by any local authority or other employer.

 *The Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012*. London: The Stationery Office Limited. Available at <http://bit.ly/1Xte7uq> (Accessed: 26 October 2015).

What are the HLTA Standards used by the HLTA National Assessment Partnership?

- The first standards for HLTA were introduced in 2003.
- Revised standards were published by the Training and Development Agency in 2006.
- Since 2003 over 50,000 HLTAs have been assessed through an external and trained assessor visit to the school.
- Between 2006 and 2012 the national contract for HLTA assessment was held by five Regional Providers of Assessment (RPAs).
- When Government funding ceased in 2012, these five RPAs formed the HLTA National Assessment Partnership.
- Since 2012 the HLTA National Assessment Partnership has assessed more than 5,500 HLTAs in a continuation of the same assessment process as for the first 45,000 HLTAs.
- It is very clear that a very large and significant number of schools continue to use the existing HLTA Standards and the external assessment process offered by HNAP to ensure challenge, rigour and consistency.
- HNAP continues to provide successful external preparation and assessment against the existing HLTA Standards.

How do the HLTA Standards relate to the draft standards for Teaching Assistants produced by the 2014 review panel?

- The draft standards are core standards for all teaching assistants. Therefore, they do not support identification of, or challenge towards, a higher level of performance and aspiration, for example in the use of ICT to support learning and progress or specifically in directing the work of other adults supporting teaching and learning.
- There is a strong correlation between the themes of the draft standards and the HLTA Standards.
- The draft standards (February 2015) make no reference to whole class teaching. To meet the HLTA Standards all HLTAs must demonstrate that they can lead whole class learning without a teacher present.
- The review panel clearly recognised that existing standards for HLTAs do not apply to all teaching assistants. The intention of the draft standards was not to replace the professional standards for HLTAs but to complement them.
- We welcome the unpublished draft standards as a guide to schools outlining the standards that we consider should underpin the performance of all teaching assistants.

- The HLTA Standards have the potential to continue to support differentiated performance management and continuous professional development for classroom based support staff.
- The tables on the following pages provide guidance to schools on how the unpublished draft standards can cross-reference to the HLTA Standards.

Personal and professional conduct

Professional standards for teaching assistants (Draft February 2015) Related HLTA Standards

Teaching assistants should uphold public trust in the education profession by:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
<p>1 Having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work as professional members of staff.</p>	<p>1 Have high expectations of children and young people with a commitment to helping them fulfil their potential.</p> <p>2 Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children and young people.</p> <p>3 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children and young people.</p> <p>6 Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.</p>
<p>2 Demonstrating positive attitudes, values and behaviours to develop and sustain effective relationships with the school community.</p>	<p>2 Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children and young people.</p> <p>3 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children and young people.</p> <p>5 Recognise and respect the contribution that parents and carers can make to the development and wellbeing of children and young people.</p>
<p>3 Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being by following relevant statutory guidance along with school policies and practice.</p>	<p>16 Know how other frameworks that support the development and well-being of children and young people impact upon their practice.</p> <p>32 Organise and manage learning activities in ways which keep learners safe.</p>

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants should uphold public trust in the education profession by:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
4 Upholding values consistent with those required from teachers by respecting individual differences and cultural diversity.	8 Understand the key factors that affect children and young people’s learning and progress. 9 Know how to contribute to effective personalised provision by taking practical account of diversity.
5 Committing to improve their own practice through self-evaluation and awareness.	3 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children and young people. 7 Improve their own knowledge and practice including responding to advice and feedback.

Knowledge and understanding

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
1 Acquire the appropriate skills, qualifications, and/or experience required for the teaching assistant role, with support from the school employer.	13 Know how statutory and non-statutory frameworks for the school curriculum relate to the age and ability ranges of the learners they support. 14 Understand the objectives, content and intended outcomes for the learning activities in which they are involved. 15 Know how to support learners in accessing the curriculum in accordance with the special educational needs (SEN) code of practice and disabilities legislation.

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
<p>2 Demonstrate expertise and skills in understanding the needs of all pupils (including specialist expertise as appropriate) and know how to adapt and deliver support to meet individual needs.</p>	<p>9 Know how to contribute to effective personalised provision by taking practical account of diversity.</p> <p>10 Have sufficient understanding of their area(s) of expertise to support the development, learning and progress of children and young people.</p> <p>17 Use their area(s) of expertise to contribute to the planning and preparation of learning activities.</p> <p>20 Plan how they will support the inclusion of the children and young people in the learning activities.</p>
<p>3 Share responsibility for ensuring that their own knowledge and understanding is relevant and up to date by reflecting on their own practice, liaising with school leaders and accessing relevant professional development to improve personal effectiveness.</p>	<p>7 Improve their own knowledge and practice including responding to advice and feedback.</p> <p>33 Direct the work, where relevant, of other adults in supporting learning.</p>
<p>4 Demonstrate a level of subject and curriculum knowledge relevant to their role and apply this effectively in supporting teachers and pupils.</p>	<p>13 Know how statutory and non-statutory frameworks for the school curriculum relate to the age and ability ranges of the learners they support.</p> <p>17 Use their area(s) of expertise to contribute to the planning and preparation of learning activities.</p> <p>18 Use their area(s) of expertise to plan their role in learning activities.</p>

Professional standards for teaching assistants (Draft February 2015) Related HLTA Standards

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
<p>5 Understand their roles and responsibilities within the classroom and whole school context recognising that these may extend beyond a direct support role.</p>	<p>3 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children and young people.</p> <p>6 Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.</p>

Teaching and learning

Professional standards for teaching assistants (Draft February 2015) Related HLTA Standards

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
<p>1 Demonstrate an informed and efficient approach to teaching and learning by adopting relevant strategies to support the work of the teacher and increase achievement of all pupils including, where appropriate, those with special educational needs and disabilities.</p>	<p>15 Know how to support learners in accessing the curriculum in accordance with the special educational needs (SEN) code of practice and disabilities legislation.</p> <p>19 Devise clearly structured activities that interest and motivate learners and advance their learning.</p> <p>20 Plan how they will support the inclusion of the children and young people in the learning activities.</p> <p>21 Contribute to the selection and preparation of resources suitable for children and young people's interests and abilities.</p> <p>28 Use their ICT skills to advance learning.</p> <p>29 Advance learning when working with individuals.</p> <p>30 Advance learning when working with small groups.</p>

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
	31 Advance learning when working with whole classes without the presence of the assigned teacher.
2 Promote, support and facilitate inclusion by encouraging participation of all pupils in learning and extracurricular activities.	8 Understand the key factors that affect children and young people’s learning and progress. 20 Plan how they will support the inclusion of the children and young people in the learning activities. 27 Recognise and respond appropriately to situations that challenge equality of opportunity.
3 Use effective behaviour management strategies consistently in line with the school’s policy and procedures.	26 Use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour.
4 Contribute to effective assessment and planning by supporting the monitoring, recording and reporting of pupil progress as appropriate to the level of the role.	23 Monitor learners’ progress in order to provide focused support and feedback. 24 Support the evaluation of learners’ progress using a range of assessment techniques. 25 Contribute to maintaining and analysing records of learners’ progress.
5 Communicate effectively and sensitively with pupils to adapt to their needs and support their learning.	4 Communicate effectively and sensitively with children, young people, colleagues, parents and carers. 9 Know how to contribute to effective personalised provision by taking practical account of diversity. 22 Monitor learners’ responses to activities and modify the approach accordingly.

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
	<p>29 Advance learning when working with individuals.</p> <p>30 Advance learning when working with small groups.</p>
<p>6 Maintain a stimulating and safe learning environment by organising and managing physical teaching space and resources.</p>	<p>19 Devise clearly structured activities that interest and motivate learners and advance their learning.</p> <p>32 Organise and manage learning activities in ways which keep learners safe.</p>

Working with others

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
<p>1 Recognise and respect the role and contribution of other professionals, parents and carers by liaising effectively and working in partnership with them.</p>	<p>5 Recognise and respect the contribution that parents and carers can make to the development and wellbeing of children and young people.</p> <p>6 Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.</p>
<p>2 With the class teacher, keep other professionals accurately informed of progress or concerns they may have about the pupils they work with.</p>	<p>6 Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.</p> <p>25 Contribute to maintaining and analysing records of learners' progress.</p> <p>33 Direct the work, where relevant, of other adults in supporting learning.</p>

Professional standards for teaching assistants Related HLTA Standards
(Draft February 2015)

Teaching assistants are expected to:	Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:
<p>3 Understand their responsibility to share knowledge to inform planning and decision making.</p>	<p>6 Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.</p> <p>17 Use their area(s) of expertise to contribute to the planning and preparation of learning activities.</p> <p>33 Direct the work, where relevant, of other adults in supporting learning.</p>
<p>4 Understand their role in order to be able to work collaboratively with classroom teachers and other colleagues, including specialist advisory teachers.</p>	<p>6 Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.</p> <p>15 Know how to support learners in accessing the curriculum in accordance with the special educational needs (SEN) code of practice and disabilities legislation.</p> <p>33 Direct the work, where relevant, of other adults in supporting learning.</p>
<p>5 Communicate their knowledge and understanding of pupils to other school staff and education, health and social care professionals, so that informed decision making can take place on intervention and provision.</p>	<p>12 Know how to use ICT to support their professional activities.</p> <p>17 Use their area(s) of expertise to contribute to the planning and preparation of learning activities.</p> <p>23 Monitor learners' progress in order to provide focused support and feedback.</p>

Where can I find more information?

Resources

A number of resources are provided on the HNAP website:

 www.hlta.org.uk/resources

The resources include downloadable documents focussed upon the benefits of HLTA to schools and the benefits of gaining HLTA status through the HNAP partnership.

Preparation and training

Each RPA has its own dedicated website for HLTA and can put you in touch with local Providers of Preparation in your region.

Links to the RPAs can be found on the HNAP website:

 www.hlta.org.uk/about